

1 Decision making pattern of farm Women in different farm and non-farm activities

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5 **ABSTRACT**

7 The present study was undertaken to study the decision making pattern of farm Women
8 in different farm and non-farm activities with following objectives i) to study the selected
9 personal and socio personal and socio-economic characteristic of rural women and ii) to
10 analyze the decision making pattern of rural women in different farm and non farm activities
11 The study was conducted in Six Districts of Assam. A purposive cum simple random
12 sampling technique was adopted for selecting the respective samples for the study. Altogether
13 1200 farm women were selected for the present study. Data was collected personally by
14 interview method. The findings reveals that farm women belonged to low socio-economic
15 status, less than fifty per cent of farm women took independent decision in maintenance of
16 house (35.25%), followed by buying food items for family consumption (34.17%) and crop
17 harvesting and transporting (33.75%). majority (78.75%) of farm women took joint decision
18 in purchase of household items, purchase of implements (73.66%) followed by selling of
19 crops and where to sell (72.42%), buying of clothes for family members (67.25%).

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21 **Key word :** Decision making, Farm women, Farm activities and Non-farm activities

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28 **Introduction**

29 Women are the backbone of agricultural workforce and also make essential contributions
30 to the agricultural and rural economies in all developing countries. Their roles vary
31 considerably between and within regions and are changing rapidly in many parts of the
32 world, where economic and social forces are transforming the agricultural sector. Compared
33 to men, women are generally involved in a wider range in crops, livestock and agro-based
34 activities. Despite their role in different activities of farming, their involvement in decision making

35 process is still seems questionable. Most of the farmer in India are women (Shiva, 1991) and
36 also many decisions from seeds to resources such as land, labour and input allocation,
37 marketing, storage are taken by women themselves or jointly with their husband or with the
38 family members. It is understood that women responsibility in agriculture is far more than
39 male because of their involvement in multifarious activities. In villages farm women are fully
40 occupied and over burdened with three fold responsibility of home, agriculture and livestock
41 management Malapit et al. (2019) and (Holland and Rammohan, 2019) .Despite their great
42 involvement in India's agricultural economy, they remain most downtrodden and oppressed,
43 seeking recognition and reward for their effort. Formalized restraints of seclusion within the
44 four walls of their home, ineffectiveness in living and work decision are still the traditional
45 codes. We know that decision making is the root of all human activities. Therefore success
46 and development of farming and family living depend upon how well the family makes its
47 decisions and contribution of women in such decision as manager of her family are valuable.
48 Thus the present study was taken with following objectives, to throw light on the real picture of
49 decision making pattern of women

- 50 i) To study the selected personal and socio-economic characteristic of rural women.
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- 52 ii) To analyze the decision making pattern of rural women in different farm and non farm
- 53 activities

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55 **Materials and Methods:**

56 2.1. Sample and sampling procedure

57 The study was conducted in three agro-climatic zones of Assam state in India : Upper
58 Brahmaputra Valley Zone, Central Brahmaputra Valley Zone and North Bank Plain Zone. A
59 multistage purposive cum- random sampling design was followed. From each selected agro-
60 climatic zone two districts, (total six) were selected purposively. Again from each selected
61 district one sub-division (total six) were selected purposively considering the involvement of
62 farm women in agricultural activities. From each selected sub-division two blocks total
63 (twelve) were selected purposively. From each selected block four villages were selected
64 randomly. Thus 48 villages were selected for carrying out the study. From each selected
65 village 25 farm women, (total 1,200) were selected randomly.

66 2.2.Variable and its measurements

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68 2.2.1. Socio-economic status

69 This refers to the position of the respondent in society and was determined by various social
70 and economic variables such as caste, land holding, education, type of house, main family

71 occupation, family type, family size, material possession and organizational membership of
72 farm women. The socio-economic status of farm women were measured by the socio-
73 economic scale developed by (Trivedi,1963) with slight modification. On the basis of score
74 obtained by the farm women they were categorized into the 3- three categories: Low with
75 score range below $\bar{X} - Sd$, medium with $\bar{X} - Sd$ to $\bar{X} + Sd$ and high with above $\bar{X} + Sd$.

76 2.2.2 Participation of farm women in decision making in different farm and non-farm 77 activities

78 Decision making is a thinking process. Nevertheless, farm women knowingly
79 or unknowingly participate in decision making process in farming as enterprise, which is
80 based on her long- standing field experience (Dube *et al.*, 1988). In the present study it refers
81 to the decision in farm and non-farm activities.

82 Chart 1. The categorization and scoring was done as follows:

Category	Score
No participation	1
Joint participation	2
Independent participation	3

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84 Chart 2. Similarly, according to the maximum obtainable score and scores
85 obtained by the farm women they were classified as follows :

Category	Score Range
Low	Below $(\bar{X} - Sd)$
Medium	$\bar{X} - Sd$ to $\bar{X} + Sd$
High	Above $\bar{X} + Sd$

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87 Analysis of data

88 The collected data were coded, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the
89 objectives of the present study by using appropriate tests and techniques.

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91 3.Results and Discussion

92 3.1 Socio-economic status of farm women

93 Majority 55.08 per cent of farm women of the study areas belonged to middle age
 94 group i.e.30-40 yrs. Large majority (91.66%) of farm women were married. 44.75 per cent of
 95 farm women belonged to general caste. 41.33 per cent of farm women belonged to the
 96 category of marginal farmer. 38.50 per cent of farm women had education up to middle
 97 school. 46.42 per cent farm women had mixed type of house. 46.50 per cent of the farm
 98 women's family occupation was farming. Majority (77.89%) of farm women belonged to
 99 nuclear family. The data reveals that majority (63.95%) of farm women belonged to small
 100 family. Cent per cent of farm families possessed hoe and hand tools, followed by desi plough
 101 (99.08%) and bullock (98.25%). Majority 60.91 per cent of farm families possesses two
 102 wheelers. 87.08 per cent of farm families possess mobile followed by television (70.42%).
 103 Large majority (95.42%) of farm families possess traditional chullah. 64.09 per cent of farm
 104 women were member of one organization. 52.60 per cent of farm women belonged to low
 105 socio-economic status.

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107 **3.2 Decision making pattern of farm women in different farm and non-farm activities**

108 Empowerment of farm women in decision making is a need of the time in
 109 agrarian country like India, where farming is a family occupation. Farm women who are
 110 associated with their husband in various activities have greater role in decision making
 111 process. Thus timely and judicious decision making ability of the farm family have a direct
 112 bearing on the development of agriculture sector. The farm women of Assam though
 113 deprived of getting timely extension service, they were contributing a lot to the agricultural
 114 development in the selected regions. It is therefore imperative to assess the participation of
 115 farm women in decision making in different farm and non-farm activities.

116 **Table 1. Distribution of farm women according to decision making pattern in different**
 117 **farm and non-farm activities** **N=1200**

Sl. No.	Decision making activities	Decision making pattern					
		Independent participation		Joint participation		No participation	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
Farm activities							

Sl. No.	Decision making activities	Decision making pattern					
		Independent participation		Joint participation		No participation	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Purchase of land for cultivation of crops	36	3.00	628	52.33	536	44.67
2	Purchase of Implements	73	6.03	884	73.66	245	20.41
3	Selection of crop varieties	42	3.50	745	62.08	413	34.42
4	Amount of manure and fertilizer to be purchased	21	1.75	421	35.08	728	63.17
5	Plant protection	9	0.75	351	29.25	840	70.00
6	Crop harvesting and transporting	405	33.75	753	62.75	42	3.50
7	Hired labour for transplanting	146	12.16	623	51.92	431	35.92
8	Retention of grain for consumption	93	7.75	677	56.42	430	35.83
9	Selling crops and where to sell	71	5.92	869	72.42	260	21.66
10	Seeking loan for farm resources	10	0.83	564	47.00	626	52.17
11	Buying and selling of livestock and poultry	312	26.00	645	53.75	243	20.25
12	Buying food items for family consumption	410	34.17	471	39.25	319	26.58
Non-farm activities							
13	Children's education	175	14.58	704	58.67	321	26.75
14	Buying of clothes for family members	204	17.00	807	67.25	189	15.75
15	Purchase of household items	35	2.92	945	78.75	220	18.33
16	Maintenance of house	423	35.25	511	42.58	266	22.17
17	Saving of money	310	25.83	571	47.58	319	26.58

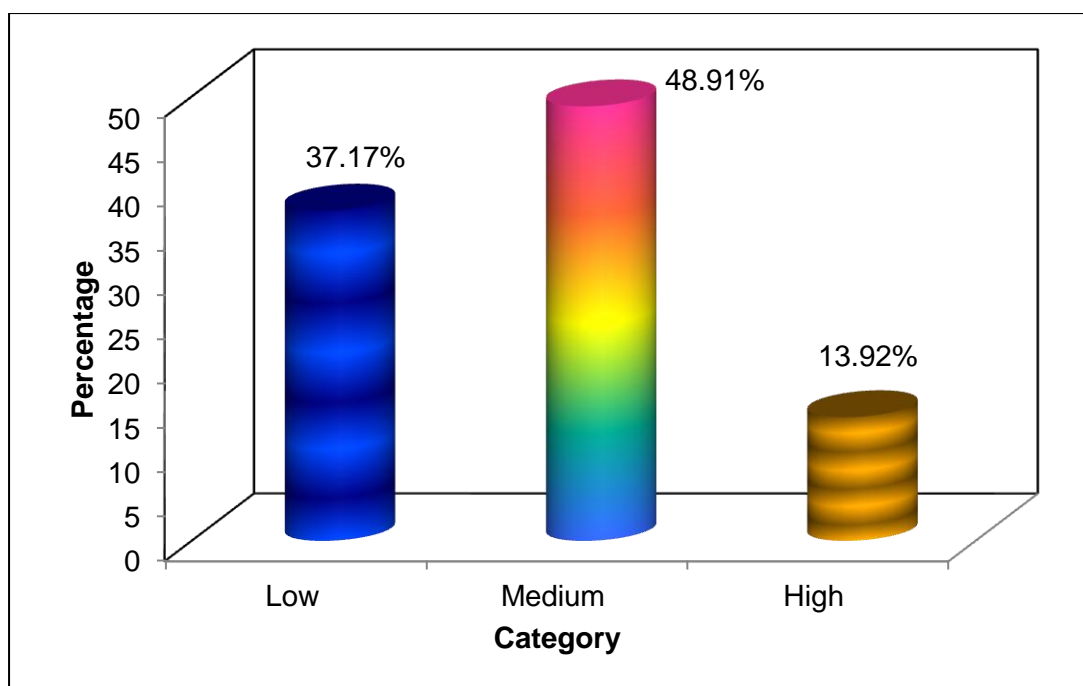
119 The data presented in Table 1 shows that less than fifty per cent of farm
120 women took independent decision in maintenance of house (35.25%), followed by buying
121 food items for family consumption (34.17%), crop harvesting and transporting (33.75%),
122 buying and selling of livestock and poultry (26.00%) and saving of money (25.83%).

123 It is interesting to observe that majority (78.75%) of farm women took joint
124 decision in purchase of household items, purchase of implements (73.66%) followed by
125 selling of crops and where to sell (72.42%), buying of clothes for family members (67.25%),
126 crop harvesting and transporting (62.75%), selection of crop varieties (62.08%), children's
127 education (58.67%), retention of grain for consumption (56.42%), buying and selling of
128 livestock and poultry (53.75%) and purchase of land for cultivation of crops (52.33%). This
129 finding is in line with Sharma (1992), Premevati and Seetharaman (2002) and Saikia *et al.*
130 (2013).

131 Equal participation of farm women in decision making process indicates that
132 they have an important role in decision making which is an important aspect of
133 empowerment.

134 **4.4.1.1 Overall participation of farm women in decision making pattern in both farm** 135 **and non-farm activities**

136 Fig. 1. shows that 48.91 per cent farm women had medium level of
137 participation in decision making followed by low (37.17%) and high level (13.92%)
138 participation.



139
140 **FIG. 1. DISTRIBUTION OF FARM WOMEN IN OVERALL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION**
141 **MAKING**

142
143 From the literature reviewed, it is observed that, traditionally women had no
144 definite decision making role in majority of family affairs because of the dominance of male
145 members in the joint family system. The situation now seems to have changed owing to the
146 disintegration of this family system in the rural areas. Considering the data it is observed that
147 women farmers took active role in decision making both in farm and non-farm activities. It is
148 felt that farm women participation in farming decision might help in the adoption of
149 agricultural messages related to field crops received from the extension trainings. Moreover,
150 this finding might develop the awareness among extension personnel to include a
151 proportionate number of farm women in their planned extension activities along with other
152 clientele.

153 To sum up, farm women are socio-economically empowered to some extent
154 due to availing different extension services by them. It was observed that farm women had
155 ownership of economically important resource like milch animal, had access to credit,
156 majority of farm women saved money in between Rs. 1000 to 5000, enjoy liberty to some
157 extent in incurring the expenditure. It was further observed that farm women had little
158 exposure to communication media, sometimes had contact with extension agencies, had good
159 social exposure, low level of leadership ability and took part in decision making.

160 Empowerment is a complicated process, which comprises of short-term and
161 long-term strategy. To empower the farm women there is need to increase their access to new
162 information as well as to credit. Further, by increasing their social and institutional
163 participation at all levels by strengthening training programmes for them, there should be
164 long drawn strategy for increasing their access to and control over appropriate technology.

165 Less than fifty percent of farm women took independent decision in crop harvesting and
166 transporting (33.75%) followed by as maintenance of house (35.25%) and buying food items
167 for family consumption (34.17%). 48.91 per cent farm women had medium level of
168 participation in decision making followed by low (37.17%) and high level (13.92%)
169 participation.

170 **Conclusion:**

171 The findings indicate that decision-making patterns in farm work seem to be changing
172 and women have increasingly become important members of the family as decision-makers,
173 both on the farm as well as at home. This indicate that farm women were socio-economically
174 empowered to some extent due to availing different extension services.

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